



# Lisa Murkowski

U.S. Senator - Alaska

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## *eNews from Senator Lisa Murkowski - Vol. 1, Issue 4*

**September 30, 2005**

### **CHIEF JUSTICE JOHN ROBERTS**

Yesterday, the Senate confirmed Appeals Court Judge John Roberts as Chief Justice of the United States. I met with Chief Justice Roberts this week and was impressed with his legal understanding and his devotion to the law. Early in his career, Roberts represented our State in cases to defend Alaska's Sex Offender Registry, Alaska's right to submerged lands, and, most notably, a case involving Indian Country and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.



We are fortunate to have a Chief Justice who understands our unique landscape, people and laws. Rather than simply represent the State, Roberts took the time to understand it - eagerly traveling by skiff in the Tongass National Forest, chit-chatting with fishing boat captains about local concerns, and practicing the pronunciation of Native village names. I wish Chief Justice Roberts a long and productive tenure on the High Court and look forward to the President's next nomination and another fair confirmation process.

### **STORMS CLOSE TO HOME**

With hurricanes on the Gulf Coast still on our minds, we were reminded this week that severe storms are not isolated to one area of the country. The powerful storm that struck communities from the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta north to Point Hope brought high winds of 64 mph and seas surging to 8 1/2 feet that caused flooding, beach erosion and other damage. One emergency official called the storm a "once-every-20-years event." Thankfully, no injuries were reported. The disaster plans were in place and were put to good use. This storm serves as a local reminder of how important it is to have working plans in each and every one of our communities.

### **SHORING UP OUR COASTLINES**

As we continue the clean-up and repair of the Gulf Coast from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, I've signed a letter urging that the Senate take up the Water Resources Development Act of 2005 (WRDA).

WRDA authorizes critical flood control, storm damage reduction, and environmental restoration projects across the country, including projects in Alaska. The devastation along our coasts has served as a warning that we must shore up our defenses against catastrophic floods everywhere. A bill I sponsored (S.1338) was passed out of committee this week that will enable a comprehensive study of water resources in Alaska. We need to do more to shore up our coastal and flood-prone interior communities and assess the totality of our water resources to both help prevent and

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prepare for a disaster in our State.

## "FISH AID"

Alaskan efforts to aid the victims of the recent hurricanes are ongoing – from continuing to take in evacuees to "Fish Aid," a concert to help the fishing victims of the Hurricanes that will be staged this evening in Juneau.

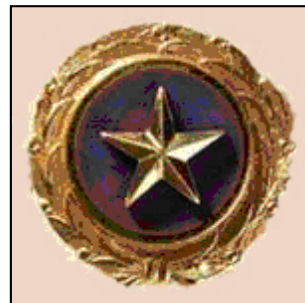
## GROWING SUPPORT FOR ANWR

This hurricane season has also taught us the vulnerability of our domestic energy supply, and now Americans across the country are realizing what we have long known in Alaska – ANWR is the best hope to expand and secure domestic energy production.

A recently released Pew Research Center for the People & the Press national public opinion poll shows support for ANWR development has risen 8 percent in the past six months, to 50 percent of the public.

## GOLD STAR MOTHERS

This week, legislation I co-sponsored recognizing the Gold Star Mothers, American mothers who have lost sons and daughters who served in the Armed Forces, unanimously passed the Senate. Founded in 1928, American Gold Star Mothers assist veterans of the Armed Forces and their dependents in the presentation of claims to the Veterans Administration, and aid to the families of the men and women who served and died or were wounded or incapacitated during hostilities. Their activities perpetuate the memory of all whose lives were sacrificed in our wars.



I encourage all Alaskans interested in sending a message of support to our troops overseas to visit: <http://www.americasupportsyou.mil/>

## EAST ASIA RELATIONS

As the chairman of the Foreign Relations subcommittee on East Asia and Pacific Affairs, I've recently held hearings to examine US – East Asia relations and met with foreign dignitaries visiting the U.S. Capitol. At a recent hearing, I noted that, as a nation with an enormous Muslim population, Indonesia can continue to be a valuable partner in the War on Terror. When I met with the Foreign Minister of Thailand last week, I thanked him for Thailand's assistance with our Hurricane disaster victims and suggested that Alaska be the location of the next American-Thai free trade discussions. And, at a hearing regarding U.S. relations with Japan, I discussed the possibility of Japan having permanent membership on the United Nations Security Council.

In this time of economic growth and increasingly peaceful relations within the region, healthy American relations with East Asia are increasingly important.



The Foreign Minister of Thailand and Sen. Murkowski

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